List of books for Understanding Others with synopses from GoodReads.com

Wonder by RJ Palacio—physical disability

I won't describe what I look like. Whatever you're thinking, it's probably worse.  
August (Auggie) Pullman was born with a facial deformity that prevented him from going to a mainstream school—until now. He's about to start 5th grade at Beecher Prep, and if you've ever been the new kid then you know how hard that can be. The thing is Auggie's just an ordinary kid, with an extraordinary face. But can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, despite appearances?

Accidents of Nature by Harriet McBryde Johnson—all types of disabilities

**An unforgettable coming-of-age novel about what it's like to live with a physical disability**--It's the summer of 1970. Seventeen-year-old Jean has cerebral palsy, but she's always believed she's just the same as everyone else. She's never really known another disabled person before she arrives at Camp Courage. As Jean joins a community unlike any she has ever imagined, she comes to question her old beliefs and look at the world in a new light. The camp session is only ten days long, but that may be all it takes to change a life forever.  
  
Mockingbird by Kathryn Erskine—autism

In Caitlin’s world, everything is black or white. Things are good or bad. Anything in between is confusing. That’s the stuff Caitlin’s older brother, Devon, has always explained. But now Devon’s dead and Dad is no help at all. Caitlin wants to get over it, but as an eleven-year-old girl with Asperger’s, she doesn’t know how. When she reads the definition of closure, she realizes that is what she needs. In her search for it, Caitlin discovers that not everything is black and white—the world is full of colors—messy and beautiful.

My Most Excellent Year by Steve Kluger—deafness and LGBT issues

Meet T.C., who is valiantly attempting to get Alejandra to fall in love with him; Alejandra, who is playing hard to get and is busy trying to sashay out from under the responsibilities of being a diplomat's daughter; and T.C.'s brother Augie, who is gay and in love and everyone knows it but him.

How to Steal a Dog by Barbara O’Connor—homelessness

Georgina Hayes is desperate. Ever since her father left and they were evicted from their apartment, her family has been living in their car. With her mama juggling two jobs and trying to make enough money to find a place to live, Georgina is stuck looking after her younger brother, Toby. And she has her heart set on improving their situation. When Georgina spots a missing-dog poster with a reward of five hundred dollars, the solution to all her problems suddenly seems within reach. All she has to do is “borrow” the right dog and its owners are sure to offer a reward. What happens next is the last thing she expected.

Ninth Ward by Jewel Parker Rhodes –hurricane Katrina

Twelve-year-old Lanesha lives in a tight-knit community in New Orleans' Ninth Ward. She doesn't have a fancy house like her uptown family or lots of friends like the other kids on her street. But what she does have is Mama Ya-Ya, her fiercely loving caretaker, wise in the ways of the world and able to predict the future. So when Mama Ya-Ya's visions show a powerful hurricane--Katrina--fast approaching, it's up to Lanesha to call upon the hope and strength Mama Ya-Ya has given her to help them both survive the storm.

One for the Murphys by Lynda Mullaly Hunt—foster kids

Carley uses humor and street smarts to keep her emotional walls high and thick. But the day she becomes a foster child, and moves in with the Murphys, she's blindsided. This loving, bustling family shows Carley the stable family life she never thought existed, and she feels like an alien in their cookie-cutter-perfect household. Despite her resistance, the Murphys eventually show her what it feels like to belong--until her mother wants her back and Carley has to decide where and how to live. She's not really a Murphy, but the gifts they've given her have opened up a new future.